WHITE DWARF

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The Science Fiction and Fantasy Games Magazine

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WHITE DWARF

Copyright is a legal security which rightly exists to protect an individual or company from piracy of his or their idea(s). It allows the individual or company the exclusive right to publish or sell copies of a work for a certain period of time. With a game, for example, the copyright lasts for 50 years. Individuals or companies are also able to sell the manufacturing rights of a particular product to "licencees" and hence the appearance of all the spin-off lines. Twentieth Century Fox who hold the copyright on *Star Wars* currently employ a group of heavy-duty lawyers who are quite willing to sue any pirates into oblivion. They certainly have the right to protect their copyright, but whether their motive is purely self-protection is debatable.

Wargamers have an easy time in that obviously no copyright exists, say, on World War II and therefore any battle can be simulated therefrom and put into game format by any manufacturer without infringing any copyright laws. However, SF/F games and miniature figures lean heavily on SF/F films and literature for ideas and themes. They have to. Now should manufacturers pay for the rights to produce those games and figures based on the well known books and films? Yes, of course they should, but whether or not they would be granted the rights is a different matter. Twentieth Century Fox are quite happy to allow a mass market *Star Wars* game or even *Darth Vader* bubble baths (fact) as they will generate high royalties. The manufacturer who is interested in applying for a licence to make products for the SF/F fan is likely to be turned down as the market is small.

Therefore those manufacturers have to try to get round the copyright laws at expense and annoyance to both themselves and their customers. Holders of copyright tolerate some of these goings-on, but now the SF/F games and figure manufacturers are beginning to be squeezed. The game *Siege of Minas Tirith* has disappeared from the shelves and is soon to be followed by TSR's *Battle of the Five Armies* (which may reappear at a later date) and who knows how long FGU's *War of the Ring* will last. It is sad to learn also that Miniature Figurines are soon to withdraw their *Mythical Earth* range of figures.

It seems evident that nobody will gain from this strict enforcement of copyright laws, but the SF/F hobbyist will definitely lose. Let's hope that such problems can be resolved so that in future the wargame tables will welcome the presence of *Darth Vader* with a light sabre, rather than a lawsuit, in his hand.

Ian Livingstone

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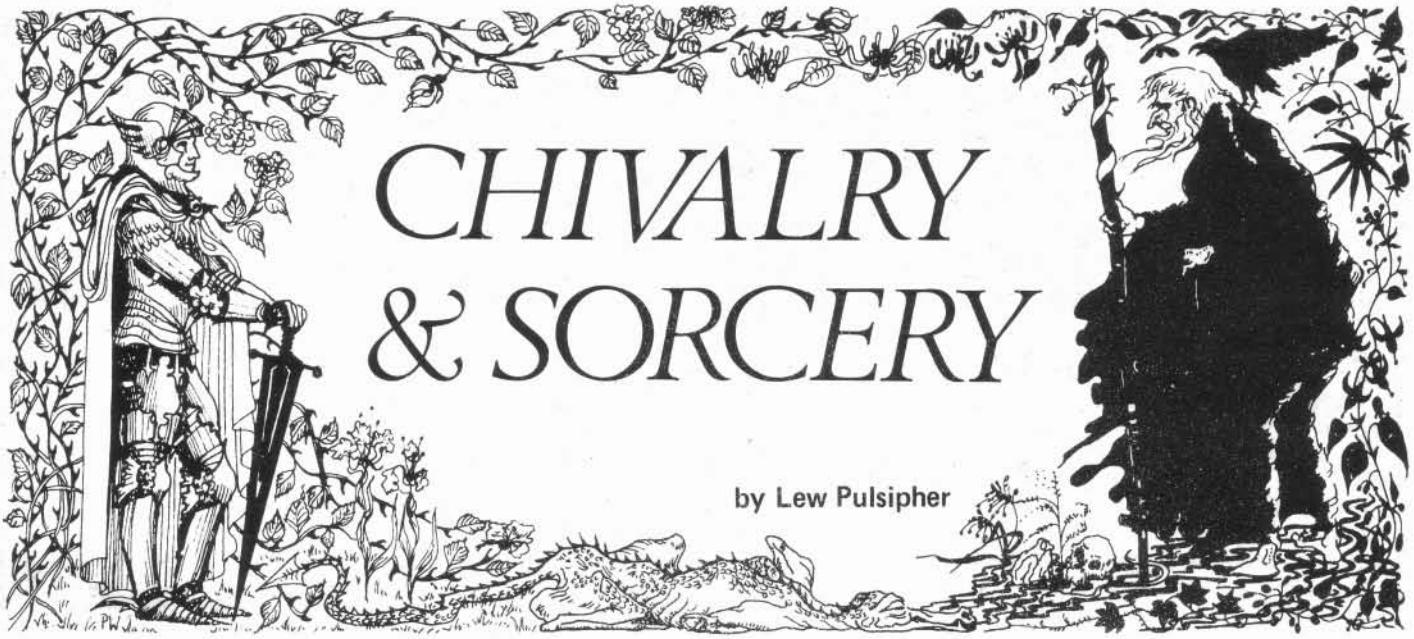


CHIVALRY & SORCERY

by Lew Pulsipher

Those who have seen some of Fantasy Games Unlimited's latest productions, e.g. the very simple *Flash Gordon and the Warriors of Mongo* or the travesty of a Diplomacy variant and insult to Tolkien, *War of the Ring,* should not be put off. Like most manufacturers, FGU's games vary considerably in quality. *Chivalry & Sorcery* (C&S) is very carefully constructed and written, and the claim that it was subject to "one of the largest efforts, in terms of development and testing time" ever in wargaming is quite believable. Whether one buys a copy is not a question of physical or literary quality but of the purpose and philosophy behind the game and one's personal preferences.

First, of course, C&S is not a boardgame but a combination of miniature armies and role-playing rules, with extensive fantasy options. A referee is required for the role-playing aspect. The two sections of rules can be used separately or together, with extensive social rules for nobles, knights, and tournaments providing the link. The game as a whole is supposed to provide "an all-encompassing campaign game in which dungeon and wilderness adventures were just a small part of the action" – but much depends on the referee's willingness to follow the authors' lead. The authors apparently developed C&S in reaction to their experiences with D&D, and where D&D is versatile, sprawling, and free-form (even in the much-improved revised version), C&S is rigidly specific, depicting a realistic medieval world of feudalism and chivalry, legendary beasts, and magic systems consistent with medieval ideas about magic. C&S is the fantasy role-playing expression of the wargamers who favour realism and simulation while D&D is the expression of playability fans who want a good *game*, not simulation. As a result C&S is much more complex than basic D&D, but the superior clarity and completeness of the rules helps compensate. Despite the clarity, C&S is not a good choice for someone just beginning role-playing because much of the basic mechanics is not explained. In other words, C&S is written for people already familiar with the details of how role-playing games work.

It's difficult to describe in this small review a very tightly and economically written set of rules 128 pages long, each page containing 4 normal typed pages reduced to quarter size. The authors have a very clear style but never explain anything twice. To comprehend it all requires a good memory or several repetitions, but everything you need is in a logical place. The contrast with unrevised D&D is staggering. The book is 8½ by 11 inches, typed on a carbon ribbon typewriter rather than typeset. The printing is very clear, so the small print doesn't strain vision, but a large magnifying glass wouldn't hurt. There are some decent illustrations and detailed contents, about 400 entries.

The Philosophy

Before going into some details about the rules it is necessary to consider the philosophy behind them. It was inevitable that someone would completely rework D&D to truly reflect a medieval millieu and, especially, medieval ideas about magic. C&S is the awesome result. In the process, unfortunately or fortunately depending on one's attitude to fantasy games, the players have become prisoners of innumerable dice throws. This enslavement is reflected both in rules and in the attitude the authors encourage. To give examples of the latter first, the authors strongly recommend that "if a character is stupid, role-play and have him act stupidly. . . The whole idea is . . . to live out fantasies that could never happen in real life." (p.2) Several paragraphs are devoted to inculcating in players the idea that magic users should be interested only in their magic, and not in adventuring or acquisitive emotions. Elsewhere players are asked to think like medieval people. The opposite view, of course, is that people participate in role-playing games to play an interesting game and be successful by their own standards, not to live out externally stimulated fantasies. Competitive gamers, as opposed to simulations fans, are unlikely to want to play a character as anything but their 20th century selves.

But the rules tend to force role playing through various dice rolls. I remember how disgusted I was when I first heard that one begins D&D by rolling handfuls of dice. C&S takes dice rolling for characteristics to extremes. A player rolls a D20 to determine: race (including monsters or elf/dwarf/hobbit), age, sex, size, dexterity, strength, constitution, personal appearance, bardic voice, intelligence, charisma, alignment, life horoscope, mental health, and social class – parents' occupation and status, family, etc. The life horoscope, in particular, gives a huge range of pluses and minuses for various character types which can penalize the player who chooses a class with unfavourable aspect. Some character types, especially the knight (the best-equipped fighter) are beyond the reach of some social classes. An unrealistic amount of social flexibility is built into the game, but limitations are very real. Possibly the worst rule of all is the morale check for characters. Imagine your bemusement when *you* want to fight on but your character wants to flee – the character wins the argument! This may be realistic (I don't think so), but the restraints may make it hard to identify with one's character, and personal identification is more important than living out diced fantasies.

Moreover, the C&S world is dominated by ideas of feudalism and chivalry, a world of order. In a sense, the cosmic balance has tipped way over toward Law. Even the monsters obey some chivalric dictates! Those who overstep the line become hunted by the entire society (a society somewhat

offensive to the 20th century mind, as well). From the authors' comments about other role-playing games (never mentioned by name but obviously D&D) it is clear that they experienced a campaign in which the referee gave away money and magic and let a bunch of naturally chaotic players (called "ego-trippers" by the authors) get away with anything. C&S is a reaction to no restraint that can in turn become a straitjacket.

The world is romanticized and some requirements of realism (such as subordination of all women) are ignored for the sake of good play. The authors obviously know a great deal about medieval society or know someone who does; and they must have access to an excellent library to research the magic rules.

There is one more point to make about philosophy. C&S is set in a country closely resembling 1170 AD France. Nothing in the fantasy genre requires that a medieval/feudal/chivalric setting be used. Very few fantasy novels include feudalism or chivalry, especially the latter, in their backgrounds. Middle-earth, for example, bears almost no resemblance to the high Middle Ages, though for some odd reason the elves and dwarves of C&S are Tolkienian rather than traditional. One might say that a medieval society is the most likely for a fantasy game, but wouldn't the presence of powerful monsters and magicians alter the very structure of that society? Of course, I am looking at this from the fantasy role-playing viewpoint. For those interested in simulating medieval warfare without fantasy, C&S is excellently conceived.

Some Details

Much of C&S is aimed at giving reasons for adventures other than in dungeons and wilderness — the former, in fact, are supposed to be rare and anything but treasure troves. It appears that many more adventures involving only one or two characters on a special mission will be required than for D&D. Gaining levels is less important (and apparently easier) than in D&D, because fighting and spell casting ability depends more on ability numbers and on activities which don't involve experience point gains.

Naturally there is a new combat system. The D&D system, which can be reduced to two pages, works quickly and simply with sufficient realism for most tastes. If anything it is too complex for many new players. C&S combat is more realistic, particularly in providing for knock-downs (the "bash") but realism must be paid for with considerable complexity. Those who find D&D melees too long won't care for the C&S system. On the other hand, there is more scope for individual player skill, and perhaps less luck overall, in the new system. Damage is not variable once a hit is determined. Barring critical hits, which are counted against body hit points, damage is inflicted on fatigue points until all are gone, when the body begins to be damaged. Characters may dodge or parry a blow, and the number of actions (including blows) one can accomplish in a melee round depends on weapon used as well as the character's ratings.

Economics resemble medieval norms, though changed enough to permit a money rather than barter mode of exchange. Thus 1,000 coins weigh one pound rather than D&D's 10-16/pound, and all coins are very scarce. 2,000 silver pieces is a fortune. An average room at an inn costs about .01 gold piece. An extensive list of costs is included.

Relatively few monsters are described, though the characteristics of undead, lycanthropes, and dragons are more interesting and intriguing than for the D&D analogues. Experience point values are given with each monster, thank heaven. Very few magic items are described because most that exist will be enchanted by some magic user, who will charge it with some kind of spell.

The magic system is the most brilliant part of C&S. There are roughly 20 different kinds of MU, each with some basis in medieval notions, e.g. astrologist, alchemist, weapon artificer, hex master, shaman, dance/chant magician, etc. Each has his own special abilities and spells, and all can cast some of the generally available spells — spells to manipulate earth air, fire, and water, illusions, commands, ancient lore, black magic, and demonology. Among other items useful to D&Ders is a long list of cost and availability of materials which might be needed for magic brews and formulations. Magic use is based on the difficulty of learning new spells and on expenditure of fatigue points. Knowledge as well as an increased personal magic factor are important. As a magic user (MU) becomes more powerful he needs less time to learn new spells or enchant items, and the more one learns, the more experience one acquires. But magic ability is not based on experience points.

There is no saving throw in most cases, but the MU may fail to hit his target. On the other hand, spells can be cast through obstacles if the MU can see the target. Spells generally are less powerful than in D&D. The kind of MU who acted as artillery is replaced by a secretive sort who, at higher levels, can manufacture items that make him a sort of machine gun.

The miniature rules are not as clear as the rest of the book. Because of the accent on realism, players may find themselves watching a battle without having much control of it. There are dozens of modifying factors and morale and insubordination rolls to consider — players are simulating, not playing a game. No doubt were one accustomed to playing with these rules all the modifications would be gone through easily (though there are too many to memorize); nonetheless all the calculations and record keeping must take a long time compared with, say, *Chainmail*.

Utility

C&S can be played in four forms:

1) miniatures warfare only
2) miniatures warfare plus role-playing with nobles and knights in tournaments and society
3) fantasy role-playing with or without with addition of society
4) as the "grand campaign", with everything

So far as the fantasy versions go, a closed campaign, that is, one with regular meetings and characters which are used nowhere else, is absolutely necessary. So much fantasy C&S depends on time and time scales that crossover play is impossible. It is too easy for a crossover player to "take 5 years off" to learn spells and enchant magic items while slowly rising in level (since he accumulates points just for existing), while ignoring difficulties of finding enough money to live on, a place to work, and safety from monsters, thieves, and rivals. The necessities of everyday existence which are so important in C&S can be ignored too easily to permit crossover play.

There are many ideas in C&S which can be adapted to other role-playing games. One finds more D&D-adaptable ideas here per pound sterling than in any D&D playing aids available. Certainly anyone who can afford to buy most of the Judges Guild material should invest in a copy of C&S. I expect D&Ders will react to C&S as they reacted to *Empire of the Petal Throne*. A minority will find its philosophy or its clarity and completeness so attractive that they'll forget D&D. Others will adopt ideas from it as they desire. But whether they adopt much or not, most D&Ders will stick with their game.

People new to role-playing games will find the revised version of D&D much easier to comprehend and begin play with than C&S. (In case anyone wonders, *Tunnels and Trolls* is not in the same league, serving at best as a steppingstone to D&D or C&S.) In the long run, D&D's superior flexibility and diversity will appeal more than C&S's realism. People new to the fantasy game genre should not try C&S, which is too complicated and assumes more knowledge than beginners can have.

There is still room for a fantasy role-playing game combining D&D's versatility, variety, and simplicity and C&S's clarity and completeness with new magic and experience systems. But for those who want realism — as much as you could get in fantasy — C&S will never be bettered.

Der Kriegspielers Fantastiques

reviewed by John Norris

Der Kriegspielers *Fantastiques* are an American range of 25mm fantasy wargame figures imported into this country. The Fantastiques should be of particular interest to Tolkien addicts, because they are by far the most suitable range currently available for wargames set in his *Middle Earth*. The range provides figures suitable for all the major personalities, and for the warriors of their human and non-human forces, not forgetting sundry monsters. Players of D&D and similar games will find that the personality figures, and indeed many of the ordinary ones, make excellent character figures, while dungeon owners will find the range a prolific source of "monsters" with which to populate the dungeon and the surrounding wilderness.

The figures are generally good, except for the few very large ones, which are nearly all poor. The strongest point of the range is its variety. Not only does it cover all the major types, but it also provides an excellent selection of figures for each one. This comprises a leader, a standard bearer, and a number of warriors in varied poses, carrying assorted weapons, with differing detailing and in some cases modelled mounted as well as on foot. Thus, for example, a group of dwarves could muster ten different types without including any personality figures. The animation of most of the figures is a welcome contrast to the limited range of stereotyped poses favoured by some British designers. The detailing of the Fantastiques is modelled with deep moulding and engraving to ensure that it comes out in the soft metal used for their casting. This can appear a little exaggerated, and less crisp, when compared to the finely engraved detail on a hard metal figure, but it can paint up very well and lends itself to shading. The less crisp casting is not of great importance on the ordinary 25mm figures, where the detailing compensates for it successfully, but it does look distinctly poor on the few really big figures. Figures of this size must be compared with 54mm scale ones, and by that standard they are a failure.

The Fantastiques have one distinct disadvantage for the British fantasy wargamer – the price. Like all imported American wargame products, they are very expensive when compared to British ones. The effective price per figure varies, but an average of about 30p for a 25mm figure is not cheap! Fantastiques are manufactured and sold in the U.S.A. by Heritage Models, who have absorbed Custom Cast and its Der Kriegspielers line, and are imported into Britain by Games Workshop of London.

The figures reviewed below are all those that have been released in the range. Custom Cast did have plans for a few more, especially human warriors, but those seem to have been dropped. In a comparatively brief review like this it is not possible to cover every figure in detail. Therefore, I have settled for a description of the main groups of figures, augmented by notes on the selection available in each group.

Personalities

I expect that the sets of most interest to players of D&D and similar games will be those of personality figures. The best is undoubtedly the excellent *Fellowship* set depicting the Nine Walkers. All of them are good, but the careworn Gandalf and commanding Aragorn are outstanding. I recommend that set highly, even though it is expensive by the standard of this range. A set of their enemies, the *Foes*, is not very impressive as a whole, but both it and the *The Hobbit* set of characters from Tolkien's book of that name do include some nice individual figures; I particularly like the weary Bilbo. Two other sets that fall into this group are those put out as selections for TSR's *Dungeon* game. One has a wizard (the excellent Gandalf), a superhero (Boromir), a hero (a fine figure of a Knight of Gondor) and a good elf, while the other provides a hobbit and a dwarf, neither of whom is the range's best figure of his race, and two specially designed figures, a cleric and a thief, about which I am less than enthusiastic.

Orcs

The range provides a very good selection of orcs, with over thirty different figures in four races. The bigger orcs are the *Great Orcs of the Red Eye*, who are Sauron's "super-orcs", and the *Orcs of the White Hand*, Saruman's man-orcs. Their smaller relatives, at about 20mm, are the *Lesser Orcs of the Red Eye*, the ordinary Mordor orcs, and the *Orcs of the North* and *of the Misty Mountains*, who are both of the race of goblins described in The Hobbit, and include wargs and warg riders.

The *Great Orcs* are stout bestial figures, but definitely humanoid, unlike the porcine offerings in another range! I feel that is much truer to the original than pig-faces, which could not be mistaken as human. The figures are clad in composite armour of plate, mail and scales, with generously spiked helmets and round shields with an eye embossed on them. There are six figures: a leader, a standard bearer with a huge gonfanon, and warriors with maces, whips, bill-guisarmes and swords.

The man-orcs are very good, and are almost human except for their fanged snarls and fantastic helmets. They are in leather armour, and have shields embossed with a white hand. A nice feature is the accoutrements slung around them profusely. There are six figures: a leader, a standard bearer with a flag, and warriors with swords, spears (actually a good ranseur), bows and poleaxes. The poses are a little wooden, but otherwise the figures are highly recommended.

The *Lesser Orcs* are stocky oriental types, with slanting eyes, and an added grin full of teeth. They wear fur coats and pointed caps, with some mail and shields. They make a very attractive group, with a selection of eight figures: a leader, a standard bearer with a flag, and warriors with swords, spears, bows, axes, hammers and bills. I recommend them.

The goblins are not as good as the lessor orcs. They are distinguished by round eyes and large hooked noses, and they wear coats and hoods either stiffened to resemble the comb of a morion at the top or falling forward like a Phrygian cap. Those *of the Misty Mountains* are on foot, while those *of the North* are mounted on wargs. The figures are: a leader, a standard bearer with a skull totem, warriors with bows, clubs, bills, scimitars, axes and spears, a group of three mounted on wargs with bow, axe and spear, and a riderless warg.

Trolls

The orcs are supplemented by some excellent trolls. There is a fine hill troll, which serves well as one of Sauron's "super-trolls", a wood troll with an axe, just the thing Ents love to hate, a lumpish cave troll, a nice river troll with webbed feet and armed with, naturally, a trident, and a large mountain troll with good detail and a large two-handed leaf-bladed sword. I recommend these highly.

Above right, a Harad Spearman and Gondor Citadel Guard followed by a Cave Troll, Hill Troll and River Troll. Below left, Gandalf of The Fellowship and below right, his companions Boromir, Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli, Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin.

Dwarves

The dwarves are good representations, short, very stout, bearded and sometimes a little ferocious. Their equipment is the customary mail shirt and spangenhelm or conical helmet, augmented by a round shield where appropriate. The figures in the dwarf range are: a leader, a standard bearer with an anvil standard, and warriors with axes, spears, swords, bows, mattocks, two-handed axes and marching with mattocks. There are two reasonable dwarves in the *The Hobbit* set, the best one must be Gimli from the *Fellowship*. These are nice figures of dwarves, but it would be wrong to suggest that they are exceptional.

Elves

The elves are slender human-like figures, distinguished by their fine features and pointed ears. It is a pity that no manufacturer, in my opinion, makes really good elves, all of them being too much like humans; however, these are among the best I have seen. If they were a little shorter, not quite as tall as the humans, they would be very good. The figures are unarmoured, and are gracefully dressed in tunics, hose and cloaks. Those available are a leader and a standard bearer, two archers, a spearman and an elf with sword and buckler. They are probably the best figures for standard elves available.

Hobbits

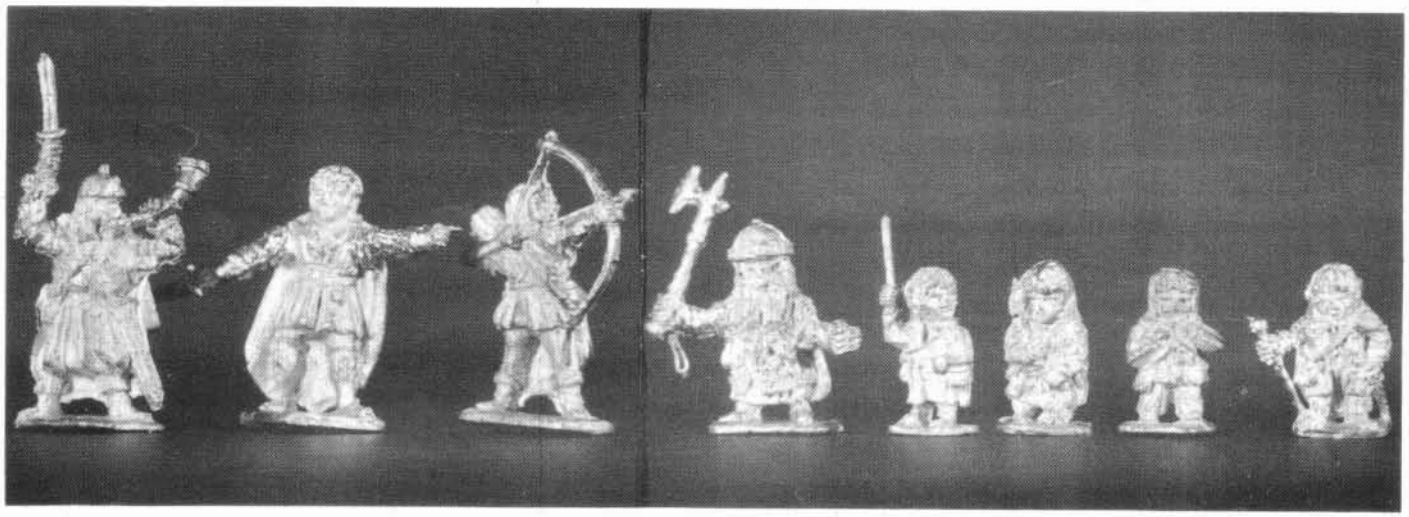
The hobbit figures are small 15mm high stocky humans with lots of curly hair. Generally they are very nice, but there are one or two poor ones. The figures available are sets of large Tooks, armed hobbits, hobbits in everyday attire, and mounted hobbits. However, few will be able to find a use for more than a small number of hobbits in their wargames, and I would suggest that the four very good hobbit figures in the *Fellowship* set should be the first choice.

Humans

The range overflows with different types of human warriors, though it is a pity that so many "types" are represented by only one or two different figures. I cannot even mention all of them here, and I will confine myself to those I like or think particularly worth a mention. The humans consist of the men of Gondor, their allies, the Easterlings, the Southrons and the Dunlendings, or hill men. The Gondor range includes two excellent Citadel Guards in winged helms, two good Ithilien Rangers and impressive figures of a mounted Swan Knight and an Amroth man-at-arms. Another good ranger figure is the Beorning. Among the "hostiles", the men of Rhun and Harad are excellent, and I hope the manufacturers may resurrect the extra figures of them once planned. The corsairs are very good for thief types. It is worth mentioning the aboriginal hill men, who are a well-modelled group, and the two good Shadow Host figures on foot.

Specials

These are mostly the poor large figures, which I will not mention individually, but there are three honourable exceptions. The Ent and the Black Riders are reasonable, and the "Lycanthrope" set is very attractive. The latter consists of a large man, obviously intended for Beorn, and a humanoid bear, his were-shape.



Monsters Mild and Malign

Part II by Don Turnbull

We continue this issue with the presentation of some of the more interesting monsters which have appeared in various D&D magazines, in particular *The Dungeoneer* by Paul Jaquays and *Alarums & Excursions* edited by Lee Gold. I must stress that none of the monsters are of my own devising although I have given them all a *Monstermark*. On with the show then.

The Beholder is an interesting D&D beast, but so powerful that few characters are likely to meet it, let alone engage melee with it. Paul Jaquays in The Dungeoneer issue 3 introduces a whole new sub-class of beasts which bear more than a passing resemblance to the Beholder but which are low-level enough to be present anywhere in the dungeon. The **Fuzzy** and the **Steely** have spherical bodies 1-2' in diameter with a single central eye and three prehensile tentacles each. To deal with the Fuzzy first, it has 2D8 (minimum 4 hits – one for each tentacle and minimum one for the body), AC7 and flies 30' per turn. The tentacles can stretch out as far as 10' to deliver a 2-12 sting attack (no more than two of these per day) but at close quarters each tentacle can also attack either by grappling the victim – once a hold has been established the tentacle does 1-3 damage per round – or striking with a normal weapon, usually a 1-4 dagger, hitting as a third level fighter with -1 hit probability. If a tentacle is hit it will regenerate in three melee rounds unless the beast is killed during that time. The sting attack is particularly powerful – in addition to the 2-12 damage it also causes paralysis for as many turns as the number of hit points inflicted. The Fuzzy has Monstermark 29.4 – about the same as an Ogre.

The Steely attacks in the same way but has 2D8 (minimum 7 hits, two per tentacle) and AC0. Since its body is armoured. It has Monstermark 68.8 which is about the same as a Su Monster or a Wight.

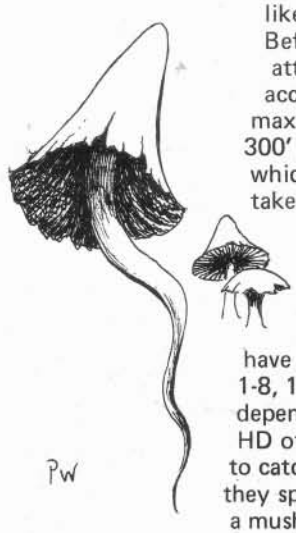
Other cousins of these two beasts, with different AC and number of tentacles, can be developed to produce a whole sub-class of Beholder-types. If you want to increase the number of tentacles, bear in mind that a creature's brain-power needs to be pretty high to coordinate attacks from even three tentacles so make corresponding adjustments to the beast's attack mode probabilities.

The **Gremlin** is humanoid – about 4' high, coloured green and looking rather like a wingless Imp with a trident in its hand. It has 3D8+1, AC8 and moves 60' per turn. In melee it attacks with its trident, doing a mere 1-4 damage, but the catch is that anything (normal or magical) used against a Gremlin has a 50% chance of malfunctioning – normal weapons may break or turn soft, missiles will rebound or turn into harmless custard pies, magical weapons will mysteriously become non-magical or even reverse their magical power. With a Monstermark of 12.8 the Gremlin isn't difficult but it can be an interesting beast to fight, and attackers may find themselves with some scrap metal on their hands after the battle.

The **Bogy** is an unusual humanoid with the head, horns and legs of a goat; it has four arms, two of which hold weapons. Perhaps it started off with ambitions to be a Demon III but didn't make the grade. It has 3D8+1, AC4 and moves 90' per turn. In melee it strikes with both 1-8 weapons on the same opponent, giving it a Monstermark of 38.7.

Golems are rather too powerful for most adventurers if they are inclined to do battle, but a less fearsome version comes as the **Cyborg**, which is a man modified internally by machinery (a sort of Steve Austin). To all intents and purposes the Cyborg is a normal man who can be dressed as fighter, MU or whatever, but it has 8D8+1, AC2 and moves 240' per turn. The thing has 18^{00} strength which gives it +4 hit probability and it is quite content to fight with bare hands doing 6-36 damage per hit. The Monstermark is 604.3 – so be warned next time you meet some guileless bloke wandering round the dungeon and asking for your assistance.

The **Cyclops** of mythology is a Giant with a single central eye which hits with a large club. In D&D terms it has 12D8, AC3 and moves 120' per turn. Hitting at -2 probability (because the single eye doesn't permit accurate perception of distance) it hands out 5-60 points damage per round which gives it a Monstermark of 936. According to its inventor, it normally guards treasure type E plus 5,000 GP.



The **Manta**, when at rest, looks like a mushroom. Before they can attack they must accelerate to their maximum speed of 300' per turn, at which speed they take on a shape like a Manta Ray with a tail which is their offensive weapon. They are 4-6D8 and have AC0. The tail delivers 1-8, 1-10 or 1-12 damage depending on the size and HD of the beast. The trick is to catch these things before they speed up, but who, seeing a mushroom in a dungeon, thinks about hitting it? The Monstermarks for the three sizes are 81, 123.8 and 175.5 which make them beasts to be reckoned with (that Slow spell could come in very useful).

Carnivorous beasts are rare in the TSR rules, and along comes an unusual beast called the **Cynopard**. It is a bluish-green carnivore with yellow-flecked fur, six legs with sharp-clawed feet, about 7½' long. It has 8D8, AC4 and moves 120' per turn. Quite a versatile beast, it either wanders around on its

hind legs, in which case it delivers four claw attacks for 3-12 damage each per round, or on all six legs in which case it bites for 4-40 damage. Assigning 50% probability to each mode of attack, the Monstermark works out at 346.7 so it is as fearsome as an 8-dice Dragon.

While on carnivores, let us look at the dreadful **Banth** which is 8-legged, 15' high at the shoulder and has a large head with many teeth. It has 12D8, AC3 and moves 150' per turn. Its bite delivers 5-50 damage per round and its Monstermark is 924.

The **Kzin** is another carnivore, half a ton in weight with bright orange fur over exoskeletal ribs. It has 5D8, AC5 and moves 180' per turn. If undamaged this beast is so dextrous and swift in melee movement that it can hit for 2-9 damage and not suffer a return attack unless the attacker has a dexterity of at least 14. If damaged it will be prone to a return attack from any adventurer, but has time to deliver two claw attacks, for 2-9 each, each round. From all but heavy weapons it takes -2 normal damage; it adds 8 to its saving roll against Hold Monster or Charm Monster; it cannot be surprised; it screams when it is attacking which has a 50% chance of stunning nearby first or second level characters for a melee round. Its Monstermark is 189 – a dangerous and exciting beast to meet, but far from impossible to deal with.

The **Sphex** is a 'steal' from Science Fiction (I forget the source). It was described as a cross between a spitting cobra and a wildcat painted tan and blue and in its D&D version has 8-10D8, AC0 and moves 120' per turn. It attacks with two 1-8 claws and a 2-12 bite – both bite and claws carry poison. In addition the bite carries a virus similar to rabies and requires Cure Disease within 24 hours or death follows in 2-12 days. The smell of sphex blood will attract other Sphexes which trace tracks with high accuracy. Altogether a pretty fearsome beast to meet, with Monstermark 1280, 1728 or 1920 depending on HD. Even in its weaker form it is more powerful than most Dragons.

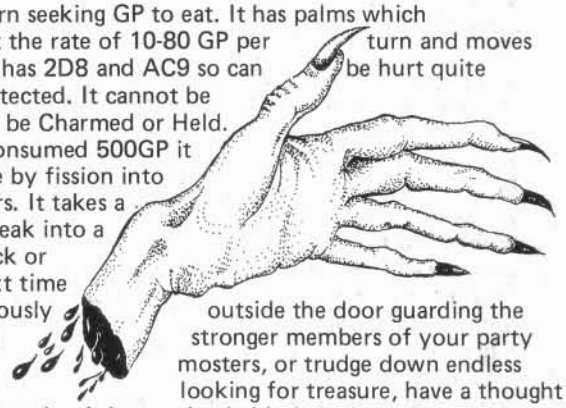
The **Imps** probably need no introduction from me. They appeared in the Dungeoneer issue 3 as beasts which had some of the qualities of Demons but were less powerful, and from what I hear have been welcomed by many DMs. They are small Demons, found all over the place and constantly getting into a lot of trouble. They would be amusing if they weren't so damned dangerous. They range from type A which has 1D8 and AC9 to type G with 7D8 and AC5. The lower level types have two or three magical spells, while the more powerful can gate in Demons and other Imps and have wider magical pwers. A very good sub-class of monsters which deserves to be very popular, particularly to DMs who quail at the thought of putting even a low level Demon in the depths. For comparison, the Monstermarks of the Imps (in order from type A to type G) are 2.7, 11.5, 25.2, 50.4, 112.5, 151.8 and 330. Compare those to the Demons' Monstermarks in *White Dwarf 2*. Another variant on the Demon is the **Iron Demon** with 6-8D8, AC2 and 90' per turn. Each round it attacks with two 1-6 claws and either a 1-8 bite or a 2-12 breath weapon (maximum three times per day). In addition to its normal attack it attempts to strangle its victim with its tail. Its Monstermark varies from 162.8 to 214.5 depending on its hit dice.

Mobil Diss were also introduced in Dungeoneer issue 3 and deserve popularity, at least with DMs. They appear in groups of one billion or more and are tiny insects – all stomach and fangs, if the description is to be believed. The collective data for 1 billion of these things is 10D8, AC9 and 90' move per turn. They are only affected by cold or heat and collectively inflict 6-48 damage per round on anyone unfortunate enough to be attacked by them. They swarm in a 3' square and only attack one victim at a time, waiting until he is eaten up before moving on to fresh pastures. With a Monstermark of 589 they are pretty fierce, and I wish I knew how to make that special chemical called Mobil Diss Salt the designer talks about.

I have saved a couple of favourites until last. First, let us look at the **Threep**. This is a humanoid with three heads, one fighter, one clerical and one magic-user. It has AC3 and variable hit dice and powers at the DM's discretion, but its strength, intelligence, wisdom and dexterity are all greater than 13. It is capable of two or three modes of simultaneous attack but is restricted to the use of only one weapon (so it could, for example, hit you with a sword in one hand, use a clerical staff on you with another and utter a magic spell, all at the same time). An interesting variation which I have tried (but no party has reached the beast yet, so I am uncertain of the outcome) is to have all the heads of differing alignments – maybe this is merely a certain recipe for nervous breakdown of the poor beast. Or perhaps one head could tell the truth all the time, another part of the time and the third none of the time – you know the old puzzles. All sorts of things come to the imagination in the context of the Threep which can therefore become merely one member of an interesting new sub-class.

As I remarked earlier, I am constantly amazed at the productivity of Lee Gold, editor of Alarums & Excursions. From her fluent pen comes another of my favourites – the **Goldeater.**

This is a long, white, dismembered hand which flies around at 180' per turn seeking GP to eat. It has palms which absorb gold at the rate of 10-80 GP per turn and moves noiselessly. It has 2D8 and AC9 so can be hurt quite easily once detected. It cannot be Slept, but can be Charmed or Held. When it has consumed 500GP it will reproduce by fission into two Goldeaters. It takes a full turn to break into a sack, back-pack or whatever. Next time you wait anxiously outside the door guarding the treasure while stronger members of your party dispose of mosters, or trudge down endless corridors looking for treasure, have a thought occasionally for what is happening behind you . . . . .



Once again, I must state that there is nothing original in this article as all the monsters have originated elsewhere. Perhaps sometime in the future the editor will allow me to present more products of my researches, but in the interim I hope you get as much pleasure from using, or meeting, the Goldeater, the Glitch, the Gremlin, the Imps and the other favourites as I have.

Editor's Note:

Next issue will see the start of a new, regular feature entitled **The Fiend Factory.** *This will be page or so of new monsters submitted by* White Dwarf *readers and edited by Don Turnbull who will apply a Monstermark to each monster published. We will be particularly interested in monsters that have some unique quality or characteristic. Each monster published will entitle the inventor to a free issue of the* White Dwarf *in which his monster appeared. Please send your entries, including a full description, to "The Fiend Factory", c/o White Dwarf, 97 Uxbridge Road, London W12.*

Next issue:

Eddie Jones has informed us that he is unable to complete his *Colouring Conan's Thews* series of articles at present due to SF paperback book publishers clamouring for his artwork. Therefore, next issue will feature:

* **Traveller**
* **A Place in the Wilderness**
* **The Fiend Factory**
* **Archive Figure Review**
* **Treasure Chest**
* **Open Box**

D&D Campaigns

by Lewis Pulsipher

PART III : Rules Recommendations

Single vs. Multi-World Campaigns

Perhaps the most important question about any campaign is whether characters will be permitted to participate in adventures under more than one referee. Some campaign referees require that all characters operate exclusively in one world. Other campaigns consist of several worlds with the same set of characters, moving from one world to another depending on who is refereeing. The first method, of course, puts the referee burden on one person or forces play of several campaigns in turn. The advantage is that the referee will know exactly what powers and magic items the characters may have and can plan accordingly. For example, if he likes to use undead he may be certain the players have no undead control potions by placing none in his treasures. If the characters play with another referee they may find undead control and ruin the first referee's plan. On the other hand, it is not often good practice to plan in such detail – situations which seem reasonable and take into account most of the problems the monsters might foresee are preferable. Moreover, a referee in a multi-world campaign can prohibit introduction of certain magic items from other worlds if he wishes. If someone finds a vorpal blade guarded by a few gnolls, another referee may decide that the player didn't earn it, and not allow it to exist in his world. In extreme cases even experience points doubtfully earned may be barred. If one referee is acknowledged final authority, and if referees all use the same system with individual variations, this will seldom be a problem.

There are several advantages in a multi-world campaign. First, players need not become accustomed to several sets of characters, one for each referee. Second, characters will advance visibly. If four separate campaigns are running, one adventure per month for each, then a character in any one campaign might not advance beyond third or fourth level in a year of play. Even though the same character won't be used on every adventure, in a year a well-played character might reach sixth or seventh level in a multi-world campaign. Third, the multi-world campaign permits those with only partial worlds, as little as one dungeon level, to referee in a campaign. The difference between a pick-up game and a campaign adventure must be experienced to be understood; a campaign is far more exciting for all participants. This is the ideal way for a person to be introduced to refereeing, particularly if he isn't willing to spend innumerable hours setting up the world.

If characters are permitted to adventure outside the established world group, there is no way to check the player's story of what occurred, and sometimes the player will get into a giveaway game which would unbalance the campaign if results were counted.

Single Character vs. Multiple Characters

According to the rules, each D&D player receives one character plus a number of followers determined by the charisma of the leader. A few campaigns are played without followers, one character per player. In either case the player must use this character every adventure until it dies permanently, whereupon he must start a new character (or, preferably, adopt one of his followers as his new character). The majority of D&D campaigns, however, permit a large number of characters, without followers, for each player. The followers method is unfair to a player who rolls a low charisma, permitting only one or two followers compared to an average of four.

Unless a player has a very high charisma he has only a limited number of people to use. One or more major character classes may be entirely absent from his group owing to unsuitable rolls. Of course, no player can expect to have one of each of the numerous sub-classes, but he should be permitted a broad choice. In particular, he is stuck with whatever class he chooses for his main character. If he is inexperienced or has bad dice rolls he may discover sooner or later that he doesn't care for his character class. In that situation he really has no choice but to get himself killed and start a new character, wasting all his previous effort. In a variation of this, the player may not find out how much fun it is to be some class he doesn't have in his small group. Many players favour one character class for personality reasons – one who pictures himself as a swashbuckler may prefer fighter types, one who is cerebral and dislikes violence may prefer the magic-user, one who is clever and sly may prefer the thief.

The solution to this problem is to permit each player to roll several characters, say six to start with. To avoid the popular ploy of rolling a character and then never using it, or using it only once, because the abilities are less pleasing than they might be, insist that each player advance his initial six characters at least to second level before he may roll an additional one. (Of course, replacement of dead characters is permitted, but obvious suicide is not allowed.) After the initial group work up, a player is seldom permitted to have more than one new first level character. If a fussy player advances many characters to second level and then doesn't use them, hoping finally to roll a monk or ranger, he must work some up to third level in order to maintain a reasonable balance. Each player may have this 'family' of characters for each alignment, but Lawfuls are best for beginners.

A couple of additional rules should be used. Even though players will often have two or three characters along on an adventure, only one should gain full experience, and the others half, duplicating the effect of the original system. Furthermore, no weak character should be permitted to gain full experience when in company with a much stronger party; this is a cheap way to gain levels fast, unless countered. Consequently, any character more than three levels lower than the level of the strongest character in a party may only receive half experience; any more than six levels below may receive only one-fourth experience. Note that this also discourages players from taking along one very powerful character with a weak party as a 'guardian angel', because all the weak ones will gain less than full experience. Also, a player must not be permitted to freely transfer treasure and magic items from one of his characters to another. When a player receives a magic item he must assign it to one of his characters on the adventure, at random if the referee desires. Trades may only be made with the referee's approval. Otherwise magic is concentrated in the hands of a favourite character, or is passed about depending on which characters are going on an adventure. Magic items may be used only when the owning *character* is present.

Alignment

Referees who run all alignments virtually the same way are shortchanging their players. Different rules for division of treasure, experience, and general conduct help vary the course of play. Each referee has a different idea of what alignment means, but the important thing is to make each alignment significantly different from the others. Otherwise alignment, a unique and fascinating aspect of the game, may as well be abandoned.

For example, experience point awards can be modified according to alignment. Good characters receive experience for 'good deeds' such as rescuing damsels or harassed villages

while Evil characters receive points for more or less the opposite (1 point per murdered peasant?). Lawfuls split experience equally among party members; they should by nature work as a team, and this method encourages teamwork rather than bickering. Chaotics, on the other hand, are uncooperative individualists. Experience is awarded to them individually, based on whatever they've done during an adventure. The braver and stronger ones get more points; teamwork is not encouraged. Which system Neutrals use depends on how they're acting and whether they accompany characters of another alignment.

Treasure

Treasure division rules also differ. In a Lawful party players should work together to test magic items, putting them aside and splitting the entire boodle by die roll at the end of the adventure, dicing for order of selection, *not* for each item separately! While the adventure continues characters should be allowed to use items without regard for who may ultimately own it, but only considering the best distribution at the time. When everyone is afraid to test something a character may ask for first choice if he volunteers to test it and finds it satisfactory. In a Chaotic party, unless someone manages to dominate the rest the grabbers-keepers 'rule' is suitable. But no rule means much to a Chaotic! For Neutrals any method is reasonable, depending on their inclination. They might most logically dice for each item separately when it is found.

Resurrection

Another means of differentiation is resurrection. While there won't be any seventh or higher level player clerics early in a campaign, non-players of that level will be about, even if a wilderness trek is required to reach one. Interpret the resurrections of the character, but with another try permitted—in other words, the character is raised, but the strain is so great he immediately dies again, and another resurrection must be attempted. In this way even the character cursed with a low constitution may be successfully raised once or twice. When a character is resurrected he loses six to ten percent of his experience and gets none for the adventure during which he died. Alternatively, or additionally, he loses one constitution point. Remember that Lawful non-player clerics will seldom resurrect a person for free—the Cosmic Balance Must be Maintained. The fee may be in the form of a Quest, a magic item, or a large contribution of gold to the Church. If a character has a past record of somewhat Chaotic deeds perhaps the cleric will refuse to resurrect him. A Neutral will have to pay very heavily to persuade someone to resurrect him, and even this won't help if he has an evil background. Evil characters have no means of resurrection.

Time-Keeping

A time record is necessary to regulate activities which are alternatives to adventuring that require large amounts of time. The easiest way to keep track of game time is to count one real week equal to one game week, regardless of what adventures go on during the week. (I've tried different methods, but weeks-long wilderness adventures have always thrown them out of kilter.) If a character goes on no adventure during the week he can spend the time learning a language (assuming someone/thing is available to teach it) or attending to his magic. This also makes it easy to keep an account of living expenses as per Volume 3 – I interpret it as 5% of experience points worth of gold every five weeks.

Language

Don't let a player merely state which languages he will know (owing to high intelligence). It takes time to learn a language, so at best a person new to adventuring will have learned one language, and of a common sort such as *orcish* rather than *unicornish!* It should not be possible to learn another alignment language fluently, if at all.

Magic

The revised rules explain the magic system clearly, thank heaven, but some points are not considered and one major change must be compensated for: any MU can make a scroll, not just a Wizard, of a spell he can use. First, this forces a referee to keep a time record, like it or not. Second in campaigns with more than one character per player, only one MU per player should be allowed to borrow a book or lend his, or make a scroll, in a week (not both). (This also prevents players from having their characters learn spells from each other—it's too easy if they can.) Third, the cost of scroll-making should be drastically increased. In the King's College (London) campaign, which is the stingiest I have ever heard of (c. 35 adventures, 7 magic items, 47 dead excluding resurrections, and no one near 5,000 EP) we've taken the cube of the spell level and multiplied by 100—e.g. 800 GP for a second level spell, 2,700 for third level, etc., with first level arbitrarily raised to 200 GP.

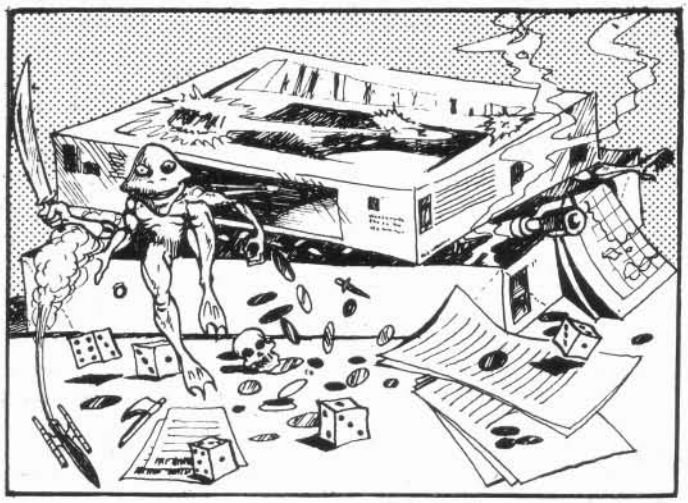
What the rules don't say is how one can learn more spells. For obvious reasons it's not impossible, but if it were easy everyone would know all the spells he desired. Try this system: a week per level of spell is required for a MU to transfer a spell from a scroll (if he can read magic) or magic book to his own magic book. If he can't read magic he can't use scrolls, but he still can use another book—otherwise the non-magic reader could never memorize spells from his own book! Lawful characters can lend their books to other Lawfuls (law/evil under duress only, of course). Good/chaotic might—you never know. No one would lend a book to a chaotic, good or otherwise—he might never get it back. Neutrals will *not* lend their own magic books under any circumstances. Remember that magic books are like life itself to an MU, and only great pressure, or certainty of their safety (as law/good lending to law/good) can persuade them to part with their own. If a book is lost, replacement is very expensive and the new book comes only with the original spells, not the newly learned ones. Magic books of dead enemies become valuable items using the full D&D system this way.

A minor but interesting restraint on MU's is to require one to know the language of anything he's charmed in order to tell it what to do. Of course, if someone else knows the language he can tell the MU how to say *simple* commands, but this doesn't help in the middle of a melee! If no one can speak the language, all the players can do is push the charmee along ahead of them and hope it will fight if attacked. Another minor restraint is to roll another save for the charmee whenever he touches something magical (excluding stuff he carried when he was charmed.) This makes players reluctant to use charmees to touch unusual treasure.

The new rules don't say how one may awake the victim of a sleep spell. I suggest that a sleep-victim is in a very deep but natural sleep, so that noise alone won't wake him but two melee rounds of strong shaking/kicking will. If a much longer interval is required, parties will be wiped out by the first or second smart and fast MU they fight—the MU sleeps a crown and his minions clobber the rest (if another sleep isn't available—but it usually is.) This will be true even if you rule that dwarves and hobbits can't be slept. On the other hand, the players won't be able to mow down dozens of enemies by successive sleep spells because the enemy will be waking each other up. It forces players to choose carefully where and when to cast sleep against a large force, so that they can get forward while the MU's slit sleepers' throats behind.

A good general rule to follow is, what is good for the monsters is good for the players, and vice versa. A magic item usable by a referee-controlled human but not by players is unrealistic and plain unfair. On the other hand, consider what players might do with an item before you put it in a non-player's hands. In two crossover games I met a Pictish shaman with a bag of demons from *Gods, Demi-Gods, & Heroes.* We knew the trick, and the second time nailed the pict and got the bag. Thereafter we could in perfect safety now down anything we encountered. But if we hadn't known the trick we would all have been dead. This is not good D&D.

OPEN BOX



OPEN BOX examines Science Fiction and Fantasy games and rulebooks currently in the shops. The reviews have been written by either independent authorities or members of the White Dwarf Test Panel.

The summaries are the Test Panel's opinion of four good and four bad points of the game reviewed. The OVERALL figure, on a 1—10 scale, rates the game itself taking all factors into consideration.

Please note that reviews carried out by people not on the Test Panel do not receive a rating.

BOOK OF MONSTERS
BOOK OF DEMONS
BOOK OF SORCERY

Little Soldier — £2.50

These are booklets of rules that may be adapted for use with fantasy games such as Dungeons and Dragons. Each is 5½ by 8½ inches, reduced photo offset, 40, 48 and 44 pages respectively. The printing is often no better than mimeograph (ink stencil), but at least the writing is clear and concise. There are illustrations, mostly from old prints and engravings.

There is a tendency among D&D fans to throw some numbers together, give it a name, and call it a new monster. In those cases where some explanation of the whys and wherefores of the creature is given it is often brief and not very believeable. The **Book of Monsters** (by Phil Edgren) leans the opposite way, partly because the 100 monsters described are not intended specifically for any particular game. Descriptions are fairly detailed, and all are based on mythological creatures rather than artifical construction. The strength, protection, magic resistance, and damage (hit dice) values are relative rather than absolute, but enough examples are included to permit easy conversion to D&D. For example, protection class 3 is equal to 'boiled leather armour' (D&D AC7), class 5 to 'steel armour' (AC3), etc. The hit dice values tend to be a bit low, that is, too many are in the sleepable 4 dice or less range. All characteristics are listed on the two page centrefold. A few of the monsters are one-of-a-kind but most are species. Some are already used in D&D, though with different powers. A bibliography is included.

Although D&D is never mentioned by name, judging from the terms used, the **Book of Demons** (by Phil Edgren) is written with applicability to the king of role-playing games in mind. Nevertheless, it could be adapted just as easily to D&D variants and any other fantasy role-playing games which come along. It presents a new system of magic use based on the medieval idea that a magician gains his powers by conjuring and commanding the demons of hell to do his bidding. This is an unsavoury and dangerous business, as reflected in the rules. The booklet explains the level and experience system, describes the purposes of conjuring and rules for percentage dice rolls for success and control of the conjured demon, and finally lists 85 major demons and their 'provinces' — areas of influence and power such as storms or buried treasure. There are additional bits about witches—either sex, but grouped in covens and much less powerful than Black Magicians — and scholars.

The percentage chances for successful conjuration and control depend on the level of the conjurer, rank of demon, assistants, pacts, human sacrifices, and quality of preparation (which takes considerable time and money). Experience comes only from successful conjuration. If the magician successfully conjures a demon but fails to control him, depending on a dice roll he may either outwit the enraged demon or be taken down into hell forever! Apparently this conjuration system is intended for use with a 'normal' role-playing magic system, and a kind of spell-point system is described. However, it is less likely to unbalance the game if the Black Magician is only a conjurer and not a spell-caster as well. In fact, considerable restraint from the referee is required or the super-powerful demons can ruin a campaign for the non-conjurers.

The **Book of Sorcery** (by Dan Bress and Ed Konstant) may be least useful of the three, depending on one's style of refereeing. It adds rules for failure and backfire of spells (known among D&D fans as 'klutzing'), but who needs more luck in an already dicey game? A list of four-line spell incantations — whose names coincide exactly with D&D spells — takes up much of the book. A player is required to correctly recite the incantations in order to cast the spells, but a ninth level incantation is no more difficult than a first level. This is followed by an extensive list of magic items which is generally reasonable.

At 75% of the cost of a D&D supplement (100% in America) one must have doubts about the value of the books. *Book of Monsters* really isn't worth it, particularly since much of the information is available in decent libraries in encyclopedias of mythology and folklore. *Book of Demons* may be worthwhile if you like new character classes and permit Chaotic characters in your campaign. I should also point out that the Black Magician class probably won't work in crossover play because the referee won't have sufficient control over what occurs. At any rate, I am incorporating them into my campaign. *Book of Sorcery* is much too short for £2.50.

Lew Pulsipher

WAR OF THE RING

Fantasy Games Unlimited — £6.95

Do you remember Diplomacy? Perhaps some of you still play it! No dice, no allocation of attack/defence/movement points, just the simple (?) capture of supply bases and out-manoeuvering of your opponents with your superior forces. Well, there you have War of the Ring — well, almost. Almost, because in War of the Ring the supply bases have intrinsic defensive values even when unoccupied, army units are of three different strengths, and the playing pieces representing the powerful individuals (Gandalf, Strider and the Nazgul) can move through two areas per turn and have strengths measured in thirds of a unit. Complex you may think. Correct!

The hardboard playing surface makes a pleasant change from the creases on the paper mapboards which are in vogue nowadays, although there is only very limited stacking involved in the game. The map itself depicts fairly accurately (allowing for the needs of the game and a little artistic licence) the area described in Tolkien's Lord of the Rings trilogy. It is divided into approximately 100 areas of widely varying shapes and sizes, clearly marked, with each area being identified by mostly pronouncable names. The only

colouring is for water, patches of wood and mountain ranges in the appropriate colours (blue, green and brown respectively in case you didn't know) which doesn't make for an artistic playing surface but makes it gloriously clear.

The pieces are the now standard cardboard die-cuts and start the game in the 'home' supply bases which are spread around each player's half of the board.

The object of the game (admit it, you were wondering when I would come to it) is different for each player. I shall quote from the rules:-

1 The Ringbearer (not the Ringlord) gets to Mount Doom. This is a two point victory for Gondor.
2 The Ringlord gets to Barad-Dur (one point for Gondor).
3 Mordor's triple army is destroyed (one point for Gondor).
4 The ring is captured by, or delivered to, Mordor's triple army. This is a two point victory for Mordor.
5 Gandalf, Strider, double army Imladris, and double army Lorien are destroyed. This is a one point victory for Mordor.

This is where the Hobbits come in (Hurrah!)

First to definitions. The Ringbearer is Frodo. The Ringlord is Gandalf, Strider or a double army who has put the ring on. As you see from the victory conditions, Mordor and Allies must capture the ring before it is destroyed. One problem. The Hobbits are invisible! So in addition to bashing each other's armies up, which is always fun, Gondor writes secret moves for the Hobbits and confuses Mordor by sending large forces in various directions which may or may not be guarding Hobbits, which may or may not be the Ringbearer, while Mordor tries to find Hobbits or the ring. Hobbits are detected by Mordorian armies arriving in the same area, whereupon the Gondor player must declare there is a Hobbit there who is now considered captured, but do not declare if he is the Ringbearer. The ring is detected by Nazgul or the triple army in the same manner. Hobbits, including the Ringbearer, may be freed if the Mordorian army is attacked and forced to retreat.

To summarise then, War of the Ring, is basically a two player game, (it can be played by four with players operating the 'person' pieces for each side) based reasonably accurately on Tolkien's novel. Combat is based on Diplomacy with added complexity which certainly adds to the game, bearing in mind it is a two (or four) player game. The skill factor is high as there are various ways in which the Gondor player can try to achieve his Victory Conditions and, therefore, a number of things which the Gondor player has to consider. Because of this variety and the unknown factors (invisible Hobbits) the game is quite intense and great fun, especially if you can keep your Hobbits hidden. One could say that it is not original, the scenario being based on a book, and the play being based on an already very popular game, but there are enough innovations to give the game a feel all its own. Presentation is simple, but clear and effective, except for one thing which worries me — the artwork. It is a bit garish and may deter some people from buying an otherwise enjoyable game.

Mike Westhead

GOOD POINTS
Secret movement
Clear-cut result
Board design
Skilful
OVERALL: 5

BAD POINTS
Presentation
Expensive
No control markers
Rule ambiguities

ALL THE WORLDS' MONSTERS

The Chaosium — £5.50

This 110+ page fantasy and D&D play-aid was originally intended to include every new monster — all those extra delights dungeonmasters have invented to expand the basic monster repertoire of the TSR *D&D* rules. The editors ruefully admit the impossibility of the task; they estimate that by now some 15,000 new monsters have been concocted by DMs far and wide, so even in a booklet of this size it would be impossible to do more than scratch the surface. The booklet is therefore intended to be the first in a series and includes only those creatures not already published elsewhere; even with this restriction, extensive cutting has been necessary. (I don't quite follow this 'not published elsewhere' statement — I have seen some of the entries in back issues of Alarums & Excursions, for instance; I suppose they mean 'not published in professional magazines', though the line between professional and amateur is imprecise in any case).

The result is a compendium of 265 new monsters of all shapes, sizes and types, neatly classified alphabetically and summarised by type and 'level'. The whole thing is printed on thick stock and punched for three-hole binding (not many shops in the UK carry three-hole binders, I find). There is a full description of each monster and its characteristics, and a few are additionally given line drawings. Enough, one might think to gladden the heart of any DM who finds, as many do, that limiting one's dungeon occupants to those in the original TSR books gives inadequate opportunity for variety and can lead to predictability as players gain familiarity with monster characteristics and particularly their weak points. Notably, the variety of low-level monsters is limited in the TSR rules, and I for one looked to this collection for a fresh variety of beasts which could guard the upper *Greenlands Dungeon* levels.

In this respect I was slightly disappointed, finding few new low-level beasts to use. Wondering just where the balance lay, and as a rough guide only, I tabulated *HD* against *AC* for each beast and emerged with the following table (each entry gives the number of monsters having characteristics in those ranges):-

		Armour class:		
		2 or better	**3-6 inclusive**	**7 or worse**
	1-4	65	86	26
	5-8	110	133	30
Hit Dice	9-12	129	41	15
	13 up	72	18	3

(There are more than 265 entries in the table because some monsters have variable HD and/or variable AC).

On this rough basis it appears that the tough monster is better represented than its weaker brethren. I hope the editors will restore the balance, and include more low-level creatures, in future additions to the series.

I found only one source of confusion in the characteristics — under the Armour Class heading, where some monsters are given a 'plussage'; the *Arcel*, for instance, has AC 2+6, and no explanation of the plus is given. My guess — and it can only be a guess — is that the plus is a dexterity and/or size bonus, high dexterity and/or small size allowing the monster effectively to improve its AC by good dodging ability. In normal circumstances, therefore, the *Arceel* has AC -4, if my guess is correct. (If it is correct, the plus is in fact a minus! The same confusion here as in the TSR rules which allows the owner of a +2 shield to subtract 2 from his AC). Unfortunately the approach is not consistent throughout the booklet, different designers using different approaches. My own preference is, in any case, for the TSR system which incorporates the dexterity bonus into the basic AC, which saves a lot of confusion.

Monster types vary tremendously — animals, clean-up crew, demons, dragons, other fliers, undead, plants and so on. Purists will criticise the biological improbability of more than a few, but I have never objected to improbability so long as the result is interesting (after all, in the context of the game in comparison with 'real life', magical effects are pretty improbable).

Not all the monsters are normally found underground, and the DM who runs only a dungeon will find a number of beasts which can only reasonably appear in the open air. An entirely new type — the *Vance Dragon* — makes its debut with seven representatives, though to my mind they add little or nothing. There are *Golems* made of all sorts of likely and unlikely

continued on page 14

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materials (would you believe Radium?). There are thirteen new *Demons*, all either strong or very strong or incredibly strong (and here was I thinking that the ones we already have are quite enough to be going on with).

Inevitably, some DMs will make more use of this collection than others. The DM who takes on board any new monster he can lay his hands on will end up with so many beasts on his hands that he will find great difficulty in using them all in his nether regions.

On the other hand, the more choosy DM, who only allows a new creature into his dungeon if it has new and interesting qualities (however he defines these) should still be able to find a dozen or two worthy new recruits, and may pick up some ideas to incorporate in his own designs.

However I would only give the collection an overall rating of 5 out of 10. My own view (and there will be those who disagree) is that too few of these new monsters are really novel. A large part of the collection seems to have been churned out by some random rote device (of which there is an example in the appendix – the Henderson Monster Creation Table); to generate new monsters by this sort of method seems to me contrary to the whole spirit of D&D, and serves the 'designer' right if he ends up with a dull dungeon, for this method of monster creation requires no imagination at all.

I found few monsters in the collection which brought a smile (cruel or otherwise) to the face, and even fewer which prompted the reaction 'I wish I had thought of that one'. For my own taste I would prefer the editors to have been a lot more discriminating – either they could have included fewer monsters (and reduced the price of what is not a cheap item) or filled the gaps with more worthwhile beasts from whatever source. In aiming for quantity I think they have sacrificed a degree of quality.

Don Turnbull

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SL11 . . . . . Apenine Warrior – hairy ape with gun.
SL12 . . . . . Apenine Warrior with laser gun.
SL13 . . . . . Reptilian Warrior with sword and shield.
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The 1978

TIME~LORD TROPHY

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(reviewed in White Dwarf No. 3 p14/15)

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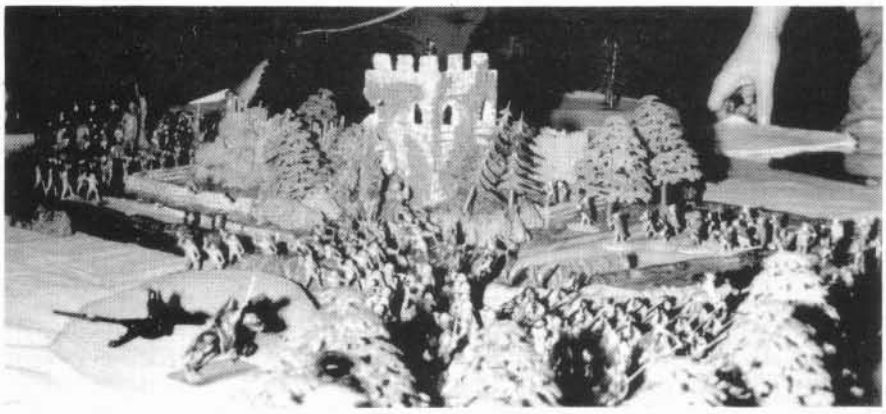
GAMES DAY III

17th December 1977



a report by Ian Livingstone

First, let us pay our respects to those three brave girls on the Information Stand who, in the face of incredible opposition, stood their ground and administered the 1000+ marauding gamers throughout the day. Little did they realise at 9.55am whilst they brushed their locks and slouched in their chairs that outside there were hundreds of steaming, chaotic, fantasy gamers who were to descend on the girls' fragile enclave in five minutes time in search of the D&D Competition.

From the reports we have had at Games Workshop, everybody (including the girls on the Information Stand) had a very enjoyable time at Games Day III. It certainly had more to offer than ever before with 31 Trade Stands; tabletop war, fantasy and science fiction battles provided by the *South London Warlords, Wargames Action Group, Universal Wargames Society, Skirmish Wargames, Medway Wargames Group, Harlow Wargames Group* and *Chestnut Lodge Wargames Group*; board games provided by the *Sigma Games Club, Ealing Games Group,* various individuals and companies. Last but by no means least there was D&D.

There were many games going on throughout the day but the big attraction was obviously the D&D Competition devised and refereed by Fred Hemmings and ably assisted by Hartley Patterson. As implied in the first paragraph above, there were many people who were keen to enter — approximately 200! This mass entry necessitated two preliminary knockout rounds. The first round was intentionally difficult so that no person would reasonably obtain full marks but everybody would get some marks, thus a cut off-mark could be decided depending on the results. In case you fancied your chances but were unable to attend, here are the questions which constituted the first round:

1 To what level can a Dwarvish bard progress: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10?
2 What are the hit dice of a Hippogriff: 2+1, 2+2, 3, 3+1, 4?
3 The easiest way to destroy Yellow Mould is: magic, water, fire, brute force, other (specify)?
4 What damage does an Ochre Jelly do: 1-8, 1-10, 1-12, 2-12, 2-16?
5 A Minotaur has how many attacks: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5?
6 According to *Greyhawk* which is the most effective against leather armour: mace, sword, battle axe, morning star, pike?
7 Which need minimum scores to create a Ranger: intelligence, wisdom, constitution, dexterity, charisma?
8 A Silver Dragon breathes: acid, fear, cold, fire, lightning?
9 A Type V Demon is somewhat like a: bear, bird, boar, serpent, toad?
10 The points needed by an Illusionist to reach 2nd level are: 1000, 1500, 1000, 1500, 3000?
11 Which is not a 6th level Magic User spell: part water, magic jar, geas, reincarnation, move earth?
12 Which is not a 3rd level Clerical spell: neutralize poison, speak with dead, turn sticks to snakes, create water, commune?
13 How many swords with a basic +3 do the rules list: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6?
14 How many types of potions are listed in the rules: 22, 24, 26, 28, 30?
15 The save for +3 armour is: 8, 10, 12, 14, 16?

It certainly wasn't easy but some people survived the test and the second round with the actual dungeon expedition starting in the afternoon. However, it was not until 7.30pm that the winner was announced, crawling beaten and bedraggled onto the stage to receive his prize. No prize but our thanks to Fred and Hartley for their hard work.

Other attractions at Games Day were the fantasy painting competition and the auction. Renowned military figure painter Steve Kemp kindly offered to judge the painting competition and awarded the first prize engraved plaques to Aly Morrison for his Winged Demon in the single figure category and Geoff Mascall for his entry "Sorry, the Squid's Off" — a truly magnificent sea monster vs fighter battle — in the multi-figure diorama category. Congratulations to them both.

The auction attracted its usual high quota of lots and bidders. Many games and accessories fetched high prices but we suspect a world record price was set for a copy of *The Dragon No.3* which fetched £4 ($8) in no time at all! The Dragon Nos. 1 — 5 are, incidentally, now out-of-print.

It was good to see many old faces and meet new. It was also pleasing to learn that such people who came to Games Day from as far as Austria and Germany had thought their journey worthwhile. Already plans are being made for Games Day IV which has been provisionally booked for October 28th, 1978, again at Seymour Hall. I hope to see you there.

Above, a most impressive Middle Earth tabletop battle performed by South London Warlords.
Below, dubious characters handling dubious material! From left to right, Bill Howard, Don Turnbull, Tony Ball and Rob Thomasson.

Food and Water on the STARSHIP WARDEN

by Richard Edwards

Metamophosis Alpha is a game where the emphasis obviously lies on survival. However, the rules themselves are mainly devoted to suriving such dangers as Bearoids, Cougaroids, Wolfoids (and possibly Haemorrhoids!?!). What seems to be lacking is reference to food or water.

Food

When characters are doing their daily rounds of the Starship in search of sustenance, the problem arises of what to look for, where to look for it, and, having found it, assessing its chance of being poisonous.

I found that in order for me as Starship Master (SM) to both predetermine and identify the food sources and also present them in a (fairly) realistic manner, it was necessary to produce a booklet and a set of cards. The booklet took the form of a *Guide To Botany* (which I will present in full later on). It lists 20 plants, trees and fungii which may, or may not, be edible. The choice of plants is entirely up to the individual SM but I will illustrate mine in order to give a more easily understood example of my methods.

First there should be set rules that should be adhered to. In my case it is that all poisonous fungii have blue gills whilst the edible ones have yellow gills. There are of course exceptions – we SMs have to have *some* fun!

Secondly, some of the poisons should take longer than 3 minutes to begin working. This is to prevent mutants who have got precognition from being safe from poisoning.

Also, like Manna, some foods should have a 'shelf life' so that food that was safe yesterday could be a class 8 poison today.

Now, having got the botany out of the way the SM should make up some cards and either draw, or if they don't trust their artwork, write the names of the various plants on the cards so that (as in my case) you have 20 cards. It is also necessary to make up some cards that say *No More Options*. I use three of these but more can be used if desired.

Method of Play

The spokesman/woman decides to search for food. In reply the SM deals out one card face up.

If they decide to eat it the result of this is looked up in the book. If, however, the players decide to give it a miss another card is dealt to them. They may proceed in this manner until a *No More Options* card comes up. There are no more choices for them.

But what if the no option card turns up first? Tough. They will have to starve for a day and try again the next day.

So much for the background work, I now present my *Guide To Botany*, it being a list of common plants and other flora to be found on all levels of my Starship:

PLANTS

Name	Description
Bluecoat:	About six inches high, it has two flowering stalks which have red heads. The maple-like leaves have a blue underside. It is harmless. The leaves taste like cabbage.
Toadweed:	About seven inches high, its single stalk divides into two, each division having a blue toad-shaped flower. It is harmless.
Salad Plant:	This remarkable feat of bioengineering comprises of a cabbage, a tomato plant and a carrot in the same plant. It is harmless.

Bladderweed: An orange seaweed-like plant which lies close to the ground. Harmless. The leaves taste like eggs.

TREES AND SHRUBS

Apple Mangrove: This tree is found in shallow water. It has a multiple trunk formation characteristic of this species. The fruit which resembles an apple is refreshing and harmless.

Perignease Pear: This bush grows about four feet high and the fruit, which resembles a pineapple, grows from the centre and the flower grows out of the top of it. The bush part also has red berries. The fruit is edible, the leaves, when smoked, are addictive. The berries are a stimulant, and the perfume from the flower causes hallucinations.

Bowman's Strawberry: This tree grows up to twenty feet high and its fruit resembles an ordinary strawberry. However it is a class 11 poison which acts in 4 minutes.

Spiny Blueberry: This shrub looks like the 'mushroom cloud' characteristic of a nuclear bomb. The head is a green bush which contains the blue berries. The trunk, which is also blue, is girdled halfway up by a ring of red leaves. The berries are class 18 poison and give off an hallucinogenic gas at night.

FUNGII

Green button: This fungus grows in clumps by the side of pathways. The stem is pale yellow and the green buttons are a cure for all poisons.

Tree Breadfruit: This flat disc-shaped fungus lives on the trunks of dying trees. It is a orange/yellow colour. It has a spongy bread taste and is medicinal — hit points being regained at twice normal rate.

Phantom Lights: These mushrooms are a very pale yellow with a blue sheen. They are harmless.

Greenstem: This colourful mushroom has a black cap which has a green sheen. The gills are yellow fading to pink where they meet the stem, and the stem is green. The green colouration is due to the presence of chlorophyll and as a result of this, the plant is a high protein source. It is harmless.

Orangetop: This mushroom is primarily yellow in colour with a pale orange top to the cap. It is harmless and very tasty.

Deadman's Hand: This fungus resembles the hand of a decaying corpse. It is brown in colour and is spade-shaped. There are ridges running along it which give the impression of being fingers.
Despite everything, it is perfectly harmless.

Redtop: This poisonous mushroom looks very much like the harmless Orangetop, except that it has blue gills and the top is pale red. It is class 10 poison unless cooked.

Purple Fountain: This strange poisonous mushroom looks like a champagne fountain with mushrooms stacked one on top of another. The caps and stems are purple but the gills are yellow. It is class 18 poison.

Bluespot: This phallus-shaped mushroom has an orange cap with blue spots. The stem is a pale blue. It is harmless when fresh but after 24 hours it becomes class 8 poison.

Bluetop: This poisonous mushroom is similar to both the red and orange tops. The cap is purple with a blue top and the stem is a blue colour, and so are the gills. It is class 6 poison.

Black Button: This fungus resembles the Green Button in every way but colouring. The buttons are black and the stem is pale blue. It is class 10 poison and acts in 4 minutes.

Puffball: This pale blue puffball is about 10 inches in diameter and is found on grassland usually. It is a class 7 poison and it acts in 6 minutes.

Well, that's it. Of the 20 plants listed 9 were harmless, 2 were medicinal, 2 were safe for part of the time and poisonous another, 6 were always poisonous and one, the Perignease Pear was a mixed blessing.

You'll notice that the odds are definitely in favour of one finding edible food. Not one plant (as opposed to the shrubs or fungii) was dangerous. Bad planning? Well not really. The list is not complete. It never can be; you see the players will gradually learn which plants to eat and which to avoid. If their favourite food doesn't show up when they look for it they may decide to go without for a day and hope that it will be available then. Of course if it doesn't show soon they may be forced to risk a try at another plant and hope.

The only solution is to constantly add new plants and remove old ones. Inserting a poisonous version of the Bluecoat (call it Redcoat) will catch out an unwary player. But be fair, keep the balance in favour of the players, otherwise they may think you're getting at them.

My list does not include the risk of being poisoned by eating a radioactive plant. I assume that individual SMs will decide whether or not a plant is in a radioactive area by studying their floor plans which should include such details. In this way even medicinal food can poison, and instead of hindering the players a SM can actually be helpful by having radioactive plants. The players may not have noticed that they had entered a dangerous zone and by killing, or at least harming one of them with a known beneficial plant you will be giving them a good clue. (You have to be cruel to be kind!)

So that it can be judged when a player has starved to death I include a table which shows the effect that lack of food will have on them.

FOOD DEPRIVATION TABLE

	Number of Days Without Food						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7+
Hit Points Lost (Temporary)	1	0	1	2	1	1	1
Constitution Points Lost (Permanent)	1	1	1	1	2	2	2

So it may be seen that the penalties of fasting are great. Hit points may be regained but Constitution points cannot, thus making the player more susceptible to the effects of poison. After a week of fasting the average player with between 9 and 12 Constitution points has little or no hope of withstanding any level of poison.

Water

It seems reasonable to me that water can be treated in a similar way to food, i.e. there is a possibility that it may be contaminated. Obviously a known safe water source will continue to be safe unless contaminated by some accident, i,e. explosion with resulting chemical leakage into the water. Therefore, a village or community may be set up near a safe water source with no problems. However, a group of nomadic humans and/or mutants will have to search for new watering places should they decide to travel far thus being unable to return to their own safe water source.

I rule that both humans and mutants cannot carry more than two days' supply of water with them and so, thereafter, they have to find a fresh supply or suffer the consequences, i.e. reduced movement, weaker constitution and possible eventual death. On finding water, I rule that there is a 20% chance of it being contaminated and, if so, consult the *Poison Chart* on page 11 of the rulebook to determine the effect, having thrown 3D6 for strength of poison.

continued on page 18

METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA

continued from page 17

Should the characters elect to go without water for a day or days rather than risking possible contaminated water, then the table below is used to reduce movement:

WATER DEPRIVATION TABLE

Human/Humanoid	(Normal)	Spaces Moved Per Melee Round Number of Days Without Water				
		1	2	3	4	5
No armour	(6)	5	4	3	1	D
Furs, shield or leather	(6)	4	3	2	1	D
Leather and shield	(5)	4	2	1	1	D
Plate armour	(4)	3	2	1	D	D
Duralloy armour	(4)	3	2	1	D	D

D equals death and so after 5 days all classes are dead unless they take a drink. Also, those characters clad in heavy armour will have to shed it if they wish to stay alive whilst continuing to refuse the water encountered for fear of it being contaminated.

So, there we are. I hope that the above will be of use to some SMs and that other people will contribute, if the Editor will allow it, to *The Guide To Botany*.

Hobbit Holes

Many D&D players in both the UK and USA experience difficulty in finding co-players. *White Dwarf* intends to help out by publishing the names, addresses, telephone numbers, etc of DMs and players in the **Hobbit Holes** column.

Please write in to White Dwarf, 97 Uxbridge Road, London W12 giving details for the following categories, as per the example given:

Name	Address	Tele. No.	Age	DM	Host or Guest
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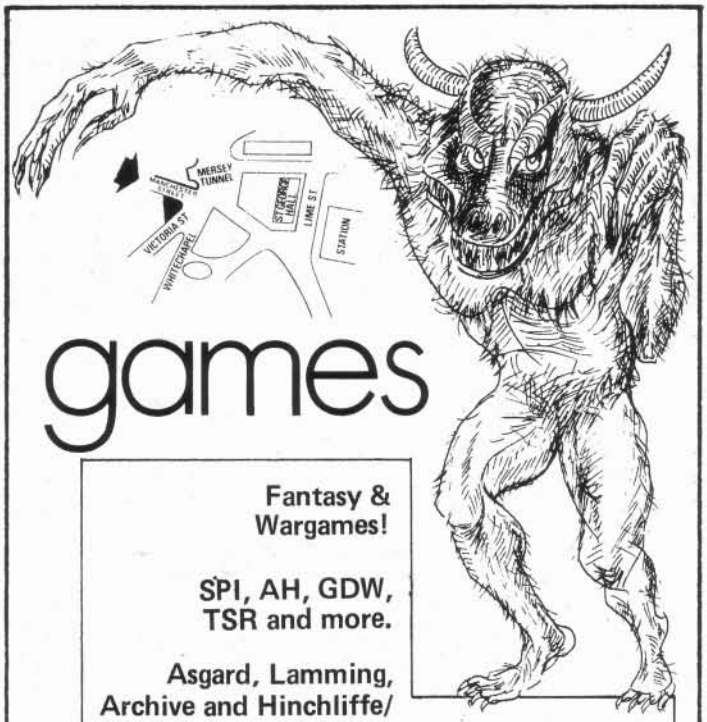

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. . .continuing with their very successful range of Microgames, notably **Ogre** and **Warp War**, *Metagaming Concepts* have recently released their 5th and 6th games in the series, **Rivets** and **Wizard**, of which Rivets is now available in the UK. . . new products recently released by *Judges Guild* and available in the UK are the **Wilderlands of High Fantasy** which is the City State campaign package including maps to the North, South, East and West of the City State and guideline booklets, the **Campaign Hexagon System** which is a booklet of campaign guidelines and numbered hex grids, and finally the **Judges Guild Journal** which is a newspaper of further thoughts and tables on the City State etc. . . it had to come, of course, and now it has — **Star Wars**, the game of the film is manufactured by *Palitoy/Parker* and, with mass market appeal, is likely to sell hundreds of thousands of copies but be horribly disappointing to SF fans. . . the long-awaited monumental game **Middle Earth** by *SPI* is now available in the States at a cost of $20. It is the complete game of the wars of Middle Earth, i.e. **War of the Ring** which is the campaign game covering the quest of the Ringbearer's party and the war itself, **Assault on Gondor** and **Battle for the Ring.** War of the Ring is available separately for $15. The bad news is that SPI only managed to obtain copyright for the game in the USA and Canada which means it will not be available in the UK at least for the time being. . .

. . .new SF/F miniature figures continue to be produced at an incredible rate. *Oracle Models* are produced by Lou Nisbet of *Underworld Oracle* and Aly Morrison. Their excellent small range of monsters includes Stone Giants, Giant Beetles and Brain Drainers. . . *Clyde Models* have released a range of figures under the trading name of *Dragon Miniatures*. Their new SF line entitled **Star Lords** will obviously appeal to *Star Wars* fans although we have been informed that they were not designed with that specific intention in mind. . . *Miniature Figurines* have just released the latest additions to their **D&D** line and these are the Demons and Demon Princes as per *Eldritch Wizardry*. There are eight figures in the new range including a Balrog, Orcus and Demogorgon. . .

. . .yet another set of fantasy role-playing rules have recently been published. Entitled **Bifrost** and published by *Skytrex* they form a three part series of which **Volume 1 : Faerie** is now available. . . *Games Workshop* have recently released the **D&D Basic Rulebook** in the UK published under licence from *TSR*. Next to come is the **Monster Manual**, followed by the **Advanced D&D Player's Handbook** and the **Advanced D&D Referee's Guide.** The important parts of *Greyhawk, Blackmoor* and *Eldritch Wizardry* (supplements for the old D&D set) will be incorporated into the advanced rulebooks. . .

. . .**Dungeoneer No 6** has finally arrived after seven months of not arriving. Lack of time and change of editor were the reasons for the delay. It will be available in the UK at the beginning of March. . .

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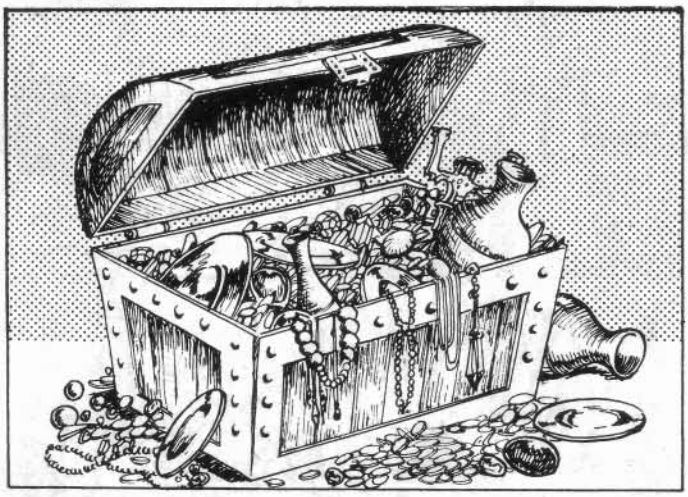

TREASURE CHEST is open for contributions relating to D&D monsters, additional rules, character classes, magic systems, objects, tricks and traps etc.

New Magic Items

by Joseph Nicholas

Rainbow Sword +3

This sword is aligned as follows: 01-65% Neutral
66-90% Lawful
91-00% Chaotic

Has *Mass Charm* ability on 1-10 humans/humanoids, useable once per day; the sword must be held up before those to be charmed for one full turn to allow its rainbow coruscations to affect them. Saving throws as per Mass Charm spell allowable; once the victim is charmed, however, he will never break the enchantment. The Sword may affect the wielder and his friends/followers, depending on its intelligence, as follows:

Intelligence	1-6	30% chance
	7	20% chance
	8	15% chance
	9	10% chance
	10	5% chance
	11	2% chance
	12	Nil chance

The Sword's Ego is never less than 10. Those accidentally affected must also save vs. Mass Charm, and are subject to the same restrictions as the intended victims (i.e., they will never break free either, *unless* someone has the wit to destroy the Sword. . .).

(I'd like to thank Keith Plunkett for originally suggesting this particular device, as a result of a similar weapon demonstrated in the Led Zeppelin movie *The Song Remains The Same*).

Water of Beguilement

This is a sparkling, sweet-smelling, very enticing liquid. Those sighting it must save vs. Charm; once saved, cannot be charmed by it and will not drink. Failure to save results in it being drunk; results as follows:

01-20% Lose 1 point from prime requisite
21-30% Lose 2 points of Charisma
31-40% Lose 2 points from prime requisite
41-50% Lose one full level of experience *immediately*
51-55% Lose two full level of experience *immediately*
56-60% Change alignment
61-65% Total amnesia
66-70% Insanity (type of insanity depends on the nature and complexity of whatever table the DM uses)
71-75% Petrification; normal saving throw
76-80% Death; no saving throw
81-85% Polymorph (to creature of DM's choice)
86-90% Geas (DM's discretion as to task; the more impossible it is, the better. . . .)
91-95% No effect at first. Victim must then save vs. Charm as originally; failure to save means another drink and another roll on the above table.
96-00% No effect at all. He who drunk has survived (relief all round?)

Water of Enchancement

This is a vile-smelling liquid that none will willingly drink (nausea sets in, bile clogs the throat, etc.) DM rolls 6-sided die for each member of the party (in secret); a roll of 6 on the die indicates that a designated individual has overcome his revulsion and will drink, with the following results.

01-30% No effect
31-40% Prime requisite increases by 1 point
41-50% Charisma increases by 2 points
51-60% Prime requisite increases by 2 points
61-70% Fighters and Thieves gain one full level of experience *immediately*. Other classes: no effect
71-80% Magic-Users and Clerics gain one full level of experience *immediately*. Other classes: no effect
81-85% All classes – prime requisite increases by 1 point, gain one full level of experience immediately
86-90% All classes – prime requisite increases by 2 points, gain two full levels of experience immediately
91-95% Total amnesia
96-00% Insanity (type of insanity depends on nature and complexity of whatever table the DM uses)

Anyone who, seeing the effect on another as a result of their drinking, wishes to drink himself, must roll a 6-sided die to do so. A roll of 5 or 6 indicates that he has managed to overcome his revulsion; failure to roll 5 or 6 indicates that he hasn't, and he cannot roll again (i.e., a second refusal indicates that he will never drink the liquid). All who drink can do so once only.

Awarding Experience Points has always been a somewhat haphazard affair. However, we believe the problem is now solved with the introduction of a new Experience Points System:

The Asbury System

by Brian Asbury

There have been many attempts to produce a perfect experience points system for D&D, but most such attempts have been pretty poor – either just more complicated variations on *Greyhawk*, or systems so complex that the DM spends half the game sweating over a pocket calculator. Well, I've created an experience-for-fighting-monsters system, which, while by no means perfect, goes a long way to solving some of the problems of Greyhawk & Co. It's both simple and workable, and as far as I know, absolutely unique. It does require a *little* extra work, but this is done by the players, not (for once) by the DM. It has also been given extensive testing in other dungeons besides my own, over the last nine months or so.

The new system – oh, let's go mad and call it the *Asbury System* – involves the DM having before him the table below.

The only extra work which this system involves is for the players to keep a record of how many points of damage they inflict upon monsters during a melee. Then, after the melee, the DM cross-references the player's level against that of the monster. The number produced is given to the player, who multiplies it by the damage he scored, and this gives him the number of experience points he picks up. Simple isn't it?

However, this does present one small problem. Just what *is* a monster's level? Should we use *Greyhawk* or *Monstermark*, for example? Well, as far as the *Asbury System* is concerned,

Character Level	Monster Level 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	5	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
2	3	7	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
3	2	5	9	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
4	1	4	7	11	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
5	1	3	6	9	13	15	17	19	21	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
6	¾	2	5	8	11	15	17	19	21	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
7	¾	2	4	7	10	13	17	19	21	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
8	½	1	3	6	9	12	15	19	21	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
9	½	1	3	5	8	11	13	17	21	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
10	½	1	2	4	7	10	12	15	19	23	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
11	½	1	2	4	6	9	11	14	17	21	25	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
12	½	1	2	3	5	8	10	13	16	19	23	28	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
13	½	1	2	3	5	7	9	12	15	18	21	26	30	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
14	½	1	2	3	4	6	8	11	14	17	19	24	28	32	34	37	39	41	43	45
15	¼	1	2	3	4	6	8	10	13	16	18	22	26	30	34	37	39	41	43	45
16	¼	¾	1	2	4	5	7	9	12	15	17	21	24	28	32	37	39	41	43	45
17	¼	¾	1	2	4	5	7	9	11	14	16	20	23	26	30	35	39	41	43	45
18	¼	¾	1	2	3	5	7	8	10	13	15	19	22	25	28	33	37	41	43	45
19	¼	¾	1	2	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	18	21	24	27	31	35	39	43	45
20	¼	½	1	2	3	4	6	8	9	11	13	17	20	23	26	29	33	37	41	45

neither. We simply start with the number of hit dice a monster has, which is its *base* level, i.e. up to 1+1 dice = level 1, 1+2 to 2+1 = level 2, etc. This, however, does not take into account any special abilities the monster might have, so the following table is then consulted, and a number of levels added to the base level for each special ability the monster has:

Special Ability	Number to be added to base level to determine final level
Poison/Disease/Causes blindness or deafness	1
Paralysation/Electrical Shock	1
Body missiles (e.g. manticore)	1
Attacks wood, metal, or stone	1 each
Psionic abilities	1-2
Polymorphing/Invisibility/Regeneration/Phase Power	2
Magic-using/Charm Person Ability	2
Flesh Dissolving Ability/ Flaming body	2
Invulnerability to normal weapons (not including fire)	2
(including fire)	3
Life Energy Draining (1 level)	2
(2 levels)	3
(3 levels)	4
Breath Weapon	3
Petrification/Death Stare	4

Any special abilities not included here can be worked out simply by comparing them to the closest item which is in the table. Okay then, let's have some examples of the *Asbury System* in use:

1) A Medusa of hit value 21 is killed by a 4th level fighter who does 14 points of damage upon her, a 9th level thief who does 5 points of damage, and a 1st level magic-user who does 2 points of damage. The Medusa has 4 hit dice plus the power of petrification, making her level 8.

Therefore — the thief picks up 5 x 17 = 85 points
the mage picks up 2 x 19 = 38 points
the fighter, who did most damage, collects 14 x 19 = 266 points.

2) A 1-die poisonous spider of hit value 7 is killed by a 1st level cleric who inflicts 3 points, a 3rd level fighter who does 2 points, and a 5th level bard who also inflicts 2 points. The spider has 1 hit die + poison, so is level 2.

Therefore — the fighter picks up 2 x 5 = 10 points
the bard picks up 2 x 3 = 6 points
the cleric picks up 3 x 7 = 21 points

Advantages of the Asbury System

a) Points are awarded in proportion to the monster's actual hit value rather than the number of dice it has, which is much more sensible. After all, a Gnoll with a hit value of 2 is going to be a pushover, but one with a hit value of 16 is quite a different matter, and should be worth proportionately more points.

b) He who does the greatest damage to the monster collects the lion's share of the experience. I've always been sickened by systems which give an equal shareout to, say, a fighter who hacks away at a monster for umpteen turns, doing 30 points of damage on it, and for that cops half the experience. Even worse, under the EPT system, the magic-user, who actually struck the death blow, would collect *all* the experience, leaving the poor old fighter, who did all the work, with nowt! Ridiculous!! The *Asbury System* does away with such farcical situations, and players pick up the points they deserve.

c) Bonuses for monsters' special abilities are given on a much more even basis. The more special abilities a monster has, the higher its level, regardless of hit dice.

d) Points can now be awarded for wounding monsters which aren't actually killed — and so they should be. Consider the situation of a group which removes all of a Vampire's hit points but which doesn't actually succeed in driving a stake through its heart. The Vampire isn't killed, it turns into a mist and escapes. So, how many points do our intrepid adventurers get for their efforts? Under some systems — none! They didn't kill the Vampire. Surely though, they deserve the points for risking life and limb, and actually driving it away. Under the *Asbury System*, they would get the points which they had earned.

e) The amount of work the DM has to do in working out experience is greatly reduced, since the players calculate their own points scored. Multipliers are looked up directly from the table, which means that the only bit of maths the DM has to do is a bit of simple addition, to find the monster's level. Admittedly some of the numbers produced in the table are a bit awkward, but the players have got time to do the calculations, whereas the DM has a lot of other things to do as well. If nothing else, it should shut up any players who complain of not having enough to do.

So there it is. Doubtless there will be those who complain that the *Asbury System* doesn't award enough experience, so my advice to such people is use this system to award the points to those who actually damage monsters, and then divide *Greyhawk* points (for hit dice only, not taking special abilities into account) amongst *everyone* present. After all, it could be argued that just standing and watching a fight can be experience in real terms, so everyone present during a battle should get *something* out of it. Or, alternately, simply double the numbers generated by my table.

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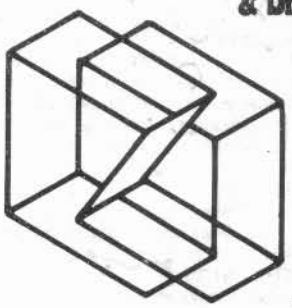

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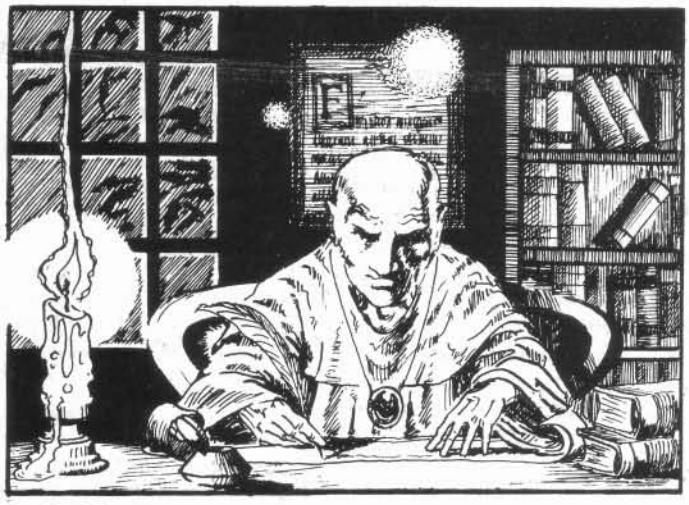

Readers' thoughts, suggestions, ideas, views, comments and criticisms. Letters should be sent to the Editor, WHITE DWARF, Games Workshop, 97 Uxbridge Road, London W12.

Dear WD,

I must say that you are putting out a most excellent prozine, far, far better than *The Dragon*. I am happy to see the nature of your games reviews get better since WD No. 1 — I'd rather hear how somebody hated or liked the game and for what reasons rather than see a lengthy description of the game itself.

I am afraid, however, that I must take exception to one point in Lew Pulsipher's article, *D&D Campaigns: Philosophy* in WD No. 3. He says he feels that players should roll their own attack and saving throw dice. I most strongly disagree, for the following reasons:

1) It is an inconvenience to the players. Most of my players do not own their own D&D sets and, being college students, really don't have the time to read a set and have me go over with them how my dungeon mechanics differs from those in the rules.

2) Cheating. In the streets of New York, one may learn many interesting things. Among those is how to roll the numbers one desires on six-sided dice. Since I was raised in Los Angeles, I have no idea on how to do this. But several of my players were raised in NYC, and I do not know if the techniques in altering the rolls of D20's can be adapted from those rolling D6s, and I am ususally too busy to look at the player's hands carefully enough to see if they are engaging in any chicanery while I am GMing. (Besides, how long is it going to be before somebody starts making crooked D&D dice?)

3) Telekinesis. I don't really feel that this exists, but there is no use taking chances. I know for sure that I don't have it — that is good enough for me.

4) Computer generated lists of random numbers — with the truly phenomenal number of dice, especially D8s, that D&D requires, some people prefer to use a computer to generate random numbers for them. Clearly this cannot be used in the manner Mr. Pulsipher would desire of us.

5) Most important — the players should be as divorced from the *mechanics* of playing D&D as much as possible. They should consider the situation in abstract. As an example of what I feel Mr. Pulsipher's method would lead to, here is a description of the cover of *Alarums & Excursion No. 26*, which was drawn by Glenn Blacow. First, imagine a group of adventurers about to enter a room, the conversation going like this:

Thief: It's an Ogre.
Mage: How big?
Thief: Average, I'd say.
Mage: Say 18 hits. Does an average of 5.5 hits per melee round.
Cleric: But what if it's an Ogre Magi?
Fighter: ON THE SECOND LEVEL? Don't be a twit!!!!!
Mage: Lesee, Muriel does about 4.5 points damage per round. Gromel has 17 strength and. . . . .
Fighter: 18!
Thief: Right!
Mage: . . . .has a +3 Warhammer, so he does 10 hits per round. Marius only has a mace, and does but 3.5 hits...
Cleric: But I'm only AC4, and I've only got 7 hits!
Fighter: You go in, or I bust your head!
Mage: . . . .and I'll throw Magic Missile, doing an average of 4.5 hits. That's 22.5 hits per round, and he averages only a quarter of that!
Cleric: But he's on a better table!
Thief: All set?

I hope that the above is an effective example. If the players get too far into the numbers involved in D&D, the GM might as well be playing with a computer, who can handle the numbers faster than any player can anyway.

Giving the players just the results of their actions, like, "You hit him, and now he's down to half the strength he was when you first encountered him," forces the players to consider the situation in a more realistic way, and increases the enjoyment of the game. Nobody except math nuts like to sit around a table and fool with numbers all day — the idea of the game is medieval adventure, not statistical numbers.

May the Farce be with you,
Bill Seligman, Ithaca, New York

Dear WD,

Well, *White Dwarf 1* arrived but a few months ago, thanks to the balance of money left in my *Owl & Weasel* account. *White Dwar 2* arrived by courtesy of the same, and I managed to circumvent lethargy for sufficiently long enough to make a note to send in a subscription. It was not enough and the non-arrival of *White Dwa 3* and, two months later, the non-arrival of *White Dw 4* only fed my procrastinatory talents. How I managed these few words *and* a cheque for a year's subscription is still a mystery; doubtless Ard, the Langfordian God of Apathy, is even now preparing appropriate magic to rid me of this wanton surge of effort.

I must admit that I like *White D.* It shows unmistakable signs of being relevant to SF/F games as they are played in this country. Miniatures and games reviews and so forth; that's what it's all about, right? Right. I think so, anyway; *Whit D* has an obligation to cover the SF/F gaming scene in as much depth and detail as it can manage.

With luck, this will arrive before *Whi D*, for me anyway, becomes an historic document. I could not forgive myself if it was only to reappear in dreams with echoing cries of *"Wh D! WD!"* from the assembled multitudes in the Great Square of Gamesville — a giant, Trantor-like planet like unto a spacebourne chessboard, divided into a plethora of dungeons and star charts. . .

White Dwarf started this letter with ten hit points. Now look at it — reduced to but two, a truncated shadow of its former self; *WD*, without even a constitution bonus to its name.

Yours belatedly,
Joseph Nicholas, Camberley, Surrey

Editors Note:
Last issue we printed a letter from Don Turnbull in which he gave his calculation for the Balrog. Unfortunately, there was a printing error and the calculation should have read as follows:

$$A = 50 \times \frac{5}{12}\left(2 \times \frac{13}{20} \times \frac{13}{2}\right) + 50 \times \frac{7}{12}\left(\frac{13}{20} \times \frac{13}{2} + \frac{12}{20} \times 7\right)$$

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Arena II
The Nottingham Wargames Association will be holding ARENA II on Saturday, 4th March 1978 at the Victoria Lesisure Centre, Bath Street, Nottingham from 9.30am to 7.00pm. Included will be display games, competition board games and D&D. Further details available from Mr M. Raymond (Tel: 0602 43457).

Salute '78
The South London Warlords' 1978 exhibitions will be held on 15th April at Chelsea Old Town Hall and on 6th-8th October at the Winter Gardens, Margate. Everybody welcome. Further details from Mr J. Bridge, 34 Tynwald House, Wells Park Road, London SE26 6AG (Tel: 01-699 8406).

Texcon
The Austin Brigade of the Republic of Texas, an organisation of board and miniature gamers, will be holding a gaming convention during the weekend of 10th-12th March 1978 at the Stephen F. Austin Hotel, Austin, Texas. For further information write to Texcon, PO Box 12385, Austin, Texas 78711, USA.

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